

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 514
By Bone

A RESOLUTION To honor and commend John Lee Hawkes.

WHEREAS, It is fitting that this Legislative Body pause to salute those commendable young citizens who embody the hope and promise of the future leaders of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, John Lee Hawkes is one such upstanding young man, a young man who is equally devoted to the care and support of his elderly grandparents, as well as his own goal of achieving a college degree; and

WHEREAS, Despite a childhood fraught with hardship and poverty, John Lee has emerged as a strong, responsible, and intelligent young man, thanks in large part to the loving relationship he has forged with his grandfather, "Pa," the man John Lee calls his hero; and

WHEREAS, For the past two years, John Lee has lived permanently with his grandparents, always sleeping on the sofa with one ear open in case Pa or Wanda, his grandmother, need him during the night; in the afternoons after school, 17-year-old John Lee bathes, shaves, and cuts the hair of his 94-year-old grandfather; and

HJR0514

00794131

WHEREAS, Devoted to his grandparents, the high school senior willingly gives up his precious free time to care for them; however, one thing John Lee never neglects is his attention to his schoolwork; and

WHEREAS, Since the age of 10, John Lee has been determined to graduate from high school and then attend college; a man who only received a first-grade education, Pa has been strongly supportive of his grandson's goals, wanting a better life for John Lee; over the years, Pa has told John Lee stories of how little he made when, long ago, he worked in a rubber plant for 90 cents a day, how hard it was to feed a family on that meager salary, and how difficult the work was; and

WHEREAS, On May 24, 2001, John Lee, with his grandfather in attendance, graduated from Watertown High School, fourth in his class of 51; in the fall, he will attend Middle Tennessee State University, with the assistance of two scholarships--the \$10,000 Ray Danner Scholarship and a four-year full-tuition scholarship from Bootstrap Awards, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, In addition to receiving an education from MTSU, John Lee hopes to play football and hopes he will make the team as a walk-on; for two years, he was the quarterback for the Watertown Tigers; "a great kid," Watertown football coach, Bill Robinson says of him; and

WHEREAS, Until recently, John Lee worried about who would watch over his grandparents while he was in Murfreesboro attending college: Who would watch the San Francisco 49ers with Pa? Who would watch wrestling on television with him? Who would weed his garden? John Lee soon remedied that situation by fixing up an old truck given to him by a friend of his mother; with reliable transportation now available, he will be able to return to Wilson County to care for his grandparents; and

WHEREAS, An uncommon teenager, John Lee eschews the vices common among many of today's youth; in his single-minded pursuit of a college education and a life of success, he avoids drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, John Lee has lived in the projects, in a camper, and any place his mother could afford; after college, John Lee dreams of building a house for his mother, sisters, and grandparents: a log cabin with a red roof; and

WHEREAS, Some day in the future, John Lee also dreams of being a grandfather to a little child, just as Pa has been to him; he wants to give the child what he calls "life lessons," experiences like Pa gave him: Pa was the man who took John Lee's hand and led him to the barn at daybreak to witness the birth of a calf; Pa was the man who took John Lee for his first haircut; Pa was the man who taught John Lee to say "ma'am" and "sir"; and

WHEREAS, Strictly adhering to his life's philosophy, "Never let yesterday's disappointments overshadow tomorrow's dreams," John Lee is aware of the difficulties he will encounter throughout his life, yet he is determined to achieve all of his life's goals, thanks to the love and direction of his grandfather; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate that this General Assembly recognize John Lee Hawkes for his unwavering optimism and determination to succeed in life; a young man reverently respectful of his elders and fully aware of his responsibilities and duties toward family, John Lee Hawkes represents the best and the brightest of his generation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we recognize John Lee Hawkes upon his graduation from high school, commend him upon his receipt of two college scholarships, and honor him for his devotion to his grandparents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish John Lee all the best as he pursues his dream of obtaining a college education as a student at MTSU.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.